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TAGS: PREL PGOV PINS MOPS ECON EAGR SU

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FORMER SPLM SECURITY CHIEF EDWARD LINO

Classified By: CDA REWhitehead, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶11. (SBU) Summary: On February 28, CG Juba met with former SPLM External Security and Intelligence Chief Edward Lino. Discussion ranged over performance of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), developments in Lino's home state of Abyei, tardy salary payments for the SPLA, possible Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) support for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and Lino's views of various investment opportunities in the South. End summary.

GoSS Growing Pains

¶12. (SBU) Lino said that he was confident that the GoSS would be able to organize itself into a more effective entity. He admitted that the GoSS had floundered at the outset due to centralization in decision making and a lack of capacity below the ministerial level. The subsequent placement of technocrats at the Under Secretary (U/S) level, and gradual filling in at levels below U/S, gradually was moving decision making to a lower level. Lino said that Salva Kiir had been besieged by endless throngs of petitioners early on, but that now line ministers were taking more of the decisions. Lino noted that the high-level meetings that initially took place at the Equatoria Hotel, a beehive of activity throughout the day, had ended. The hotel emptied out by 10:00 a.m. and the action was in the ministries.

Abyei

¶13. (C) Lino confided that he had come to Juba expecting Kiir to name him (Lino) Governor of Abyei, Lino's home state. He said that Abyei and territory to the west bordering on South Darfur posed the greatest risk for renewed fighting in the South. He nonetheless believed that, given the opportunity, he could take the situation in hand. He cited old traditions of Dinka Ngok welcoming ceremonies for Missairiya nomads driving their cattle to southern grazing lands. He said that he had been assured by Missairiya tribal elders that they favored a peaceful migration south and would work to make this succeed.

LRA

¶14. (C) Lino said that he is certain that SAF Military Intelligence has continued support for the LRA, which is now strung out along the DRC and CAR borders. He observed that this new deployment was a departure from the modus operandi of the LRA, which in the past maintained itself by sticking close to Acholi tribal lands. Lino said that he thought that SAF/MI was recruiting among southern Sudanese groups that it passed off as LRA, and supplying these people by air through indirect flights through CAR and down into DRC. He cited the

recent "LRA" presence in Obo, CAR, as proof that MI was maintaining a surrogate military presence in the South as a counterweight to the SPLA. Lino said that he had convinced Kiir publicly to accuse the North of supporting the LRA two weeks ago, to force the issue into the open.

SPLA

¶5. (SBU) Lino agreed that the failure of the SPLA to pay its rank and file was a major concern. He said that there was widespread discontent within the ranks, especially since senior SPLA officers had received salary payments.

Business and Banks

¶6. (SBU) Lino described his vision for development of the South. He said that Abyei was the nexus of cattle peoples, to the point that the land had been seriously overgrazed. He said that Abyei's location makes it the perfect site for slaughtering and meat processing for export to the North. His goal, were he to become governor, would be to promote a seven percent off-take of cattle per year until herds were reduced to a sustainable level. Lino said that he would have some interest in a new commercial bank supported by French and British interests that would make available an important pool of investment capital. He dismissed the White Nile Bank as too small and too inexperienced to provide essential banking services, arguing that a larger and more competitive banking system was required if the South were to develop a genuine private sector.

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Bio Data

¶7. (C) Lino is a Dinka Ngok born in Abieng in February 1946. He completed his secondary schooling in Wau and undertook the study of law at the University of Khartoum, until his arrest for proscribed political activity. He was assistant editor of the Nile Mirror and lived in Rumbek until 1983, when he established an SPLM political presence in Khartoum. He underwent military training and became a combatant in the 1990s, including a stint as commander of forces in Yambio. Lino was the de facto head of SPLA security and intelligence for a protracted period. He was the first SPLM official to arrive in Khartoum after signature of the CPA to set up the SPLM offices. Lino was very close to John Garang and visited the U.S. with Garang in 1989, but he is reportedly somewhat distant from Salva Kiir. Lino is anathema to some hardliners in the National Congress Party (NCP).

WHITEHEAD